

THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is the patent application of:

Inventor: Jérôme Primot, et al.

For: ACHROMATIC OPTICAL INTERFEROMETER WITH CONTINUOUSLY
ADJUSTABLE SENSITIVITY

Enclosed are:

☒ 3 - sheets of drawing.

☒ 19 - pages of specification.

☐ An assignment of the invention to: _____

☐ A certified copy of a _____ application No. _____ filed _____, 19__.

☒ Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney (unexecuted).

☐ A verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 37 CFR 1.27

☐

Fee Calculation:

SMALL ENTITY

OTHER THAN A SMALL ENTITY

FOR:	(Col. 1) No. Filed	(Col. 2) No. Extra	RATE	FEE		RATE	FEE
BASIC FEE	-----	-----	-----	\$ 345	OR	-----	\$690
TOTAL CLAIMS	8 - 20 --	0	x 9 =	\$	OR	x 18 =	\$ --
INDEP. CLAIMS	2 - 3 =	0	x 39 =	\$	OR	x 78 =	\$ --
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENTED			+ 130	\$	OR	+ 260 =	\$ --
*If the difference in Col. 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in Col. 2			TOTAL	\$ 345	OR	TOTAL	\$690.00

☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 12-0605 in the amount of \$ _____. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

☒ A check in the amount of \$690.00 to cover the filing fee is enclosed.

☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the following fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 12-0605. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

☒ Any additional filing fees required under 37 CFR 1.16.

☒ Any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17.

☐ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the following fees during the pendency of this application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 12-0605. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

☐ Any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17.

☐ The issue fee set in 37 CFR 1.18 at or before mailing of the Notice of Allowance, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.311(b).

☐ Any filing fees under 37 CFR 1.16 for presentation of extra claims.

6/13, 2000

Lawrence E. Laubscher
Lawrence E. Laubscher, Sr.
Registration No. 18,202
745 South 23rd Street, Suite 300
Arlington, Virginia 22202
(703) 521-2660

06/13/00
U.S. PRO

DENISE E. LAUBSCHER, SR.
DENISE E. LAUBSCHER, JR.

LAW OFFICES OF
LAUBSCHER & LAUBSCHER

SUITE 300

745 SOUTH 23RD STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202

(703) 521-2660

OF COUNSEL:
ROBERT J. LASKER (D.C. BAR)

Facsimile (703) 553-0174
E-mail: llplaw@aol.com

June 13, 2000

The Honorable Commissioner of
Patents and Trademarks
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

Filed herewith is a new U. S. Patent Application in the names of Jérôme Primot, et al., entitled "Achromatic Optical Interferometer with Continuously Adjustable Sensitivity" (8 claims, of which two are in independent form; 3 sheets of formal patent drawings).

Also submitted herewith is Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement, together with copies of the cited references.

Our check in the amount of \$690.00 covering the Government filing fee is also submitted herewith. Please charge any additional fees to our Account No. 12-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



Lawrence E. Laubscher, Sr.

LELsr:jlw

Enclosures

5

10

15

SPECIFICATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Be it known that we, PRIMOT Jérôme and GUERINEAU Nicolas,
citizens of the French Republic and residing at :

20

- 35 avenue de Paris, 92320 CHATILLON, FRANCE
- 42 avenue Rabelais, 92160 ANTONY, FRANCE

have invented new and useful improvements in :

25

**Achromatic optical interferometer with continuously
adjustable sensitivity**

of which the following is a specification :

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a process for analyzing the wavefront of a light beam, a diffraction grating with rectangular meshing is placed in a plane perpendicular to the light beam to be analyzed and optically conjugate with the analysis plane. Different emergent beams from the grating interfere to form an image whose deformations are related to the slopes of the wavefront analyzed. The grating multiplies an intensity function, implemented by a two-dimensional intensity grating, which defines a rectangular meshing of sub-pupils transmitting the light from the beam to be analyzed into a plurality of emergent beams disposed in accordance with a rectangular meshing, with a phase function implemented by a two-dimension phase grating which introduces a phase shift between two adjacent emergent beams such that the two emergent beams are in phase opposition.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1 - Field of the Invention

5 The invention relates to the analysis of the wavefront of a light beam.

2 - Description of the Prior Art

10 This type of analysis is used to test optical components, to qualify optical devices and to control deformable optical components used in active or adaptive optics. It is also used to study physical phenomena which cannot be measured directly, such as variations of
15 the optical index within turbulent media encountered on passing through the terrestrial atmosphere or in a wind tunnel. It is also used to test the flatness of electronic components, for example matrix focal planes, and for shaping power laser beams.

20 The type of wavefront analysis to which the invention relates is based on the use of a diffraction grating positioned on the path of the beam to be analyzed.

25 To make the following description easier to understand, a grating of the above kind is defined as an optical system introducing periodic variations of phase, intensity, or phase and intensity. Any grating is
30 therefore characterized by the multiplication of two functions : the one, called as a phase function,

representing periodic variations of phase introduced by the grating and the other one, called as an intensity function, representing periodic variations of intensity introduced by the grating.

5

French patent application No. 2,712,978 outlines the mode of construction and definition of a two-dimensional grating. A set of points disposed regularly in two directions constitutes a plane meshing. The points
10 define an elementary mesh. The elementary mesh is the smallest surface for paving the plane without gaps in the two directions defining it. The polygon of the elementary mesh is the minimum surface polygon whose sides are supported by the mediatrices of the segments
15 connecting any point of the set to its nearest neighbors. A two-dimensional grating is the intentional repetition of an elementary pattern disposed in accordance with a plain meshing. A plain meshing can define hexagonal or rectangular elementary meshes (square meshes are merely a
20 special case of rectangular meshes).

When a diffraction grating is illuminated with a light beam, called as an incident beam, the light beams diffracted by the grating, called as emergent beams, can
25 be described using two equivalent approaches.

The first approach considers the emergent beams as replicas of the incident beam. They are referred to as sub-beams, each corresponding to one order of diffraction
30 of the grating.

The second approach considers the emergent beams as beams diffracted by each mesh of the grating. They are referred to as secondary beams.

5 When an intensity function is introduced by a grating, each secondary beam originates from a sub-pupil.

10 The Hartmann-Shack analyzer is known by the article "PHASE MEASUREMENTS SYSTEMS FOR ADAPTIVE OPTICS", J.C. WYANT, AGARD Conf. Proc., N°300, 1981. The general principle of its operation is optical conjugation of the phase error to be analyzed with an analysis plane containing an array of microlenses which defines a two-dimensional grating made up of a phase function, each
15 microlens delimiting a secondary beam. In the common plane of the foci of the microlenses, referred to as the observation plane, two-dimensional meshing of spots deformed according to the slopes of the wavefront is observed. For active or adaptive optical control
20 applications, the preferred meshing is rectangular. The foregoing description is based on a conventional description of the Hartmann-Shack analyzer and on the approach of decomposition into secondary beams. Another interpretation based on decomposition into sub-beams
25 diffracted by the array of microlenses is outlined in the publication "Variations on a Hartmann theme", F. Roddier, SPIE, TUXON 1990.

30 That type of analyzer has the advantage of working in polychromatic light, provided that the path difference error to be detected does not depend on the wavelength.

It is very simple to use, consisting of a single optical component, and its optical efficiency is very high. However, its sensitivity and dynamic range can be adjusted only by changing the array of microlenses. In an analysis mode referred to as the undersampled mode it can also be used to analyze the wavefront obtained from low-intensity light sources. This analysis mode uses a small number of microlenses, regardless of the wavefront to be measured, in order to concentrate the low usable flux at a few points where the slope of the wavefront is measured.

French patent application No. 2,712,978, already mentioned, describes a three-wave lateral shear interferometer using a two-dimensional phase and/or intensity grating and a spatial filtering system. Using the approach of decomposition into sub-beams, the grating optically subdivides the incident beam to be analyzed into three sub-beams in a conjugate plane of the error. Particular optical processing of the three sub-beams obtained in this way produces an interferogram consisting of a hexagonal meshing of light spots whose contrast does not vary, regardless of the observation plane used. The interferogram is sensitive to the slopes of the wavefront, and offers the possibility of continuous adjustment of the dynamic range and sensitivity. The observation distance is defined as the distance between the observation plane and the zero sensitivity plane, which is a plane conjugate with the plane of the grating downstream of the spatial filter. In the article "Achromatic three-wave (or more) lateral shearing

interferometer", Journal of Optical Society of America A, volume 12, N°12, December 1995, pages 2679-2685, there is an outline description of a modification of the above interferometer toward a four-wave lateral shear interferometer in which the two-dimensional meshing of the light spots observed in the interferogram is rectangular and therefore better suited to active or adaptive optical control applications.

This type of analyzer is achromatic and its luminous efficiency is close to that of the Hartmann-Shack analyzer. On the other hand, it is more complex to use because of the insertion of the spatial filtering system for selecting the sub-beams between the grating and the observation plane of the interference fringe system. Also, the spatial filtering system imposes limitations on measuring light beams with a high level of interference or a very large bandwidth. It therefore cannot use the undersampled analysis mode referred to in connection with the Hartmann-Shack analyzer.

It would therefore appear to be strongly desirable to have an interferometer combining the simplicity of use and operating capacity of the Hartmann-Shack analyzer, from low-intensity light sources with high levels of interference or very large bandwidth, and the flexible adjustment of the dynamic range of the three-wave lateral shear interferometer described in French patent application No. 2,712,978 or the four-wave lateral shear interferometer outlined in the article "Achromatic three-wave (or more) lateral shearing interferometer".

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

The object of the present invention is to make
5 progress in this direction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention can be considered in the form of a
10 method or a system.

The method of analyzing the wavefront of a light
beam according to the invention is of the type wherein a
two-dimensional diffraction grating with rectangular
15 meshing is placed in a plane which is perpendicular to
the light beam to be analyzed and which is optically
conjugated with a plane of analysis of the wavefront,
thereby multiplying an intensity function by a phase
function and causing through these functions the beam to
20 be diffracted into different beams emergent from the
grating. The intensity function defines a rectangular
meshing of sub-pupils in the two-dimensional meshing
transmitting the light from the light beam to be analyzed
to form a plurality of secondary beams disposed in
25 accordance with the rectangular meshing. The phase
function introduces a phase shift between two adjacent
secondary beams such that the two adjacent secondary
beams are in phase opposition. An image formed by
interference between the emergent secondary beams is
30 created and observed in a plane located at a
predetermined distance from the perpendicular plane.

Deformations in the image is related to the slopes of the analyzed wavefront.

5 The expression "phase opposition" must be understood as also meaning phase shifts substantially adjoining absolute phase opposition.

10 Thanks to the above, the diffraction grating multiplying the two functions defined in this way diffracts a rectangular meshing of secondary beams which propagate and interfere with each other to generate an image in any observation plane parallel to the plane of the grating, the image taking the form of a rectangular meshing of light spots whose contrast is substantially
15 independent of the wavelength and of the observation distance.

20 The rectangular meshing of the light spots can be observed in the plane of the grating (zero sensitivity plane). The meshing is advantageously observed in a plane at an observation distance chosen by the user according to the slopes of the wavefront to be analyzed and the required dynamic range.

25 This method works in polychromatic light and can be used to measure beams with a high level of interference, offering continuous adjustment of the sensitivity and the dynamic range of the system by adjusting the observation distance.

30

 The user therefore has the benefit of the

flexibility of continuous adjustment of the dynamic range of the four-wave lateral shear interferometer without the user constraints associated with the insertion of the spatial filtering system.

5

The invention also encompasses systems for implementing the light beam wavefront analyzing method. Such a system comprises input optics optically conjugating a reference plane with a plane in which the wavefront is analyzed and a two-dimensional diffraction grating with rectangular meshing in the reference plane. The grating causes diffraction of the beam into different emergent beams, and comprises an intensity beam and a phase grating. The intensity grating has an elementary intensity mesh in which an elementary intensity pattern is disposed and which is of length L in a first direction of the rectangular meshing and of width l in a second direction of the rectangular meshing. The phase grating has an elementary phase mesh in which an elementary phase pattern is disposed and which is of length $2L$ in the first direction of the rectangular meshing of the phase grating and of width $2l$ in the second direction of the rectangular meshing of the phase grating. The sides of the elementary meshes of the phase grating coincide with sides of the elementary meshes of the intensity grating. The elementary phase pattern introduces a phase shift close to π (modulo 2π) between two secondary beams passing through two adjacent elementary intensity patterns. The system also comprises means for observing an image formed by interference between the emergent secondary beams, deformations in the image being related

to the slopes of the analyzed wavefront.

A preferred intensity two-dimensional grating according to the invention has a rectangular intensity elementary pattern whose area is close to 50% of the area of the intensity elementary mesh.

A preferred two-dimensional phase grating according to the invention, made from a material having a particular thickness and a transmission index, has a four-square checkerboard phase elementary pattern, each square of the checkerboard having the length L and the width l of the intensity elementary mesh, two adjacent squares having different thicknesses performed the defined phase function by varying the index.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Further features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following particular description of several preferred embodiments of the invention shown in the corresponding accompanying drawings, in which:

- FIG. 1A is a theoretical optical diagram of a system for implementing the invention for testing optical components;

- FIG. 1B is a theoretical optical diagram of a system for measuring turbulent media, such as the terrestrial atmosphere, through which passes a beam from

a polychromatic source such as a star;

- FIG. 2 shows a rectangular meshing two-dimensional grating;

- FIG. 3A shows one example of a rectangular meshing intensity grating that can be used in the invention;

- FIG. 3B shows one example of a square meshing intensity grating that can be used in the invention;

- FIG. 4 shows one example of a rectangular meshing phase grating that can be used in the invention; and

- FIG. 5 shows one example of a rectangular meshing grating according to the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIGS. 1A and 1B show two examples of systems for implementing the invention.

In FIG. 1A, a polychromatic light source S is placed at the focus of a collimating lens O_1 . The parallel light beam leaving the lens O_1 illuminates a sample to be tested, which is shown diagrammatically as a plate LA with parallel faces, placed in the plane P_0 and having a flatness error D_1 . The sample can be any other optical system (a lens or a mirror, in particular a telescope mirror), or simply a region of a gaseous medium disturbed by a flow, for example.

FIG. 1B illustrates a system for implementing the invention in the case of an application to astronomy. A plane wave from a very distant source such as a star, for example, passes through a turbulent medium whose index variations are represented by sinuous lines.

An input arrangement provides the optical adaptation necessary for implementing the process according to the invention.

This adaptation is preferably performed by an afocal system consisting of two lenses O_2 and O_4 with a field lens O_3 at an intermediate position. The functions of the afocal system are to match the diameter of the beam analyzed in the plane P_D to the dimensions of the two-dimensional grating in a plane P_C and to conjugate the plane P_D containing the error to be analyzed optically with the plane P_C .

Other means can be used to achieve this optical conjugation of the two planes.

A two-dimensional grating GR able to combine intensity and phase functions is placed in the analysis plane P_C . This grating can consist of two gratings GI3A, GP4 or more, like that shown in FIG. 5, for example. It is the particular combination of functions that characterizes the grating of the invention, rather than a particular embodiment.

In the example of embodiment shown, the grating GR is made up of an intensity grating GI and a phase grating GP.

5 The intensity grating GI implements an intensity function FI which defines a rectangular meshing of sub-pupils transmitting the light of the beam to be analyzed in the form of a plurality of secondary beams.

10 The phase grating GP implements a phase function FP which introduces a mean phase shift between two adjacent secondary beams close to π (modulo 2π).

15 The order in which the two functions are effected in the plane is of no importance.

 According to the invention, the interferogram is made up of a rectangular meshing of spots.

20 The plane P_c is a zero sensitivity plane.

 The observation is effected in a plane P_s located at a chosen observation distance d from the plane P_c .

25 The dynamic range and sensitivity of the system vary with the observation distance. Thus if d is zero, the observation plane is coincident with the analysis plane P_c in which the grating is located and the sensitivity is zero.

30

 In general, it is possible to use additional means

of observing the plane P_s , for example a lens which optically conjugates the plane P_s and a more accessible working plane.

5 FIG. 2 shows a rectangular meshing two-dimensional grating GR characterized by a rectangular elementary mesh of length L and width l . The meshing, represented in chain-dotted line, is not necessarily visible in the final grating. In each mesh, a pattern MO is shown which
10 introduces variations of the intensity and/or phase of the incident light beam.

FIGS. 3A and 3B show two-dimensional intensity gratings GI which offer a simple means of implementing
15 the intensity function of the method according to the invention. FIG. 3A shows a crossed Ronchi grating GI3A with a rectangular meshing of length L and width l . The shaded areas are areas of zero transmission and the clear areas can be either transparent or reflecting. These
20 clear areas constitute sub-pupils. The dimensions L_1 and l_1 of these transparent areas are preferably close to $2L/3$ and $2l/3$, respectively. The area of each sub-pupil is therefore close to half the area of the elementary mesh of the rectangular meshing. FIG. 3B shows a crossed
25 Ronchi grating GI3B with a square mesh of side length L , which is deemed to constitute the most advantageous embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of one example of a
30 two-dimensional phase grating GP which offers a simple means of implementing the phase function of the method

according to the invention. FIG. 4 shows a rectangular meshing checkerboard grating GP4 with side length 2L and 2l, e.g. with two levels of thickness. The grating GP4 has stepped periodic thickness variations so that the thickness difference e between adjacent steps or levels satisfies the equation:

$$e = \lambda/n \cdot (k+\frac{1}{2}),$$

where λ is the mean operating wavelength,

n is

- either the refractive index of the material when the phase grating is used in transmission mode, or
 - twice the refractive index of the transmission medium when the phase grating is used in reflection mode,
- and k is an integer.

The shaded areas of the grating GP4 can be transparent for a grating used in transmission mode or reflecting for a grating used in reflection mode.

An advantageous means of implementing the gratings GI and GP is to use the masking and photolithographic etching techniques widely used in the semiconductor industry; thus GI can be implemented by depositing a metal mask onto a substrate wafer and GP by etching a substrate wafer. With these techniques it is possible to make a two-dimensional phase and intensity grating which combines the FI and FP functions of gratings GI and GP, respectively, from a single substrate plate.

Other methods of implementing the two functions FI and FP with gratings GI and GP can be envisaged, for example based on registering interferograms on photosensitive plates to produce holographic gratings.

5

Combining the GI and GP gratings generates a meshing of light spots whose contrast is substantially independent of the observation distance d and the wavelength used. Because of the sudden intensity variations caused by the Ronchi intensity grating GI, contrast fluctuations occur during propagation which cause high-frequency local deformation of the light spots. These unwanted deformations remain small compared to the sinusoidal intensity modulation observed in the two directions and do not interfere with the analysis of the wavefront.

15

French patent application No. 2,682,761 proposes a technique for analyzing the interference images obtained in order to obtain the slopes of the wavefront. Those techniques can be applied directly to the meshings of lights spots obtained in accordance with the present invention.

20

The grid of the deformations of the meshing of light spots can also be obtained by calculating the position of the barycenters of the light spots. This technique is routinely employed in the case of a Hartmann-Shack analyzer and can be applied directly to the rectangular meshings of light spots obtained in accordance with the present invention.

30

WHAT WE CLAIM IS :

1. A method of analyzing the wavefront of a light beam, comprising the following steps of :

5 placing a two-dimensional diffraction grating with rectangular meshing in a plane which is perpendicular to said light beam and which is optically conjugated with a plane of analysis of the wavefront, thereby multiplying an intensity function by a phase function, said intensity
10 function defining a rectangular meshing of sub-pupils in said two-dimensional grating transmitting the light from said light beam to form a plurality of secondary beams disposed in accordance with said rectangular meshing, and said phase function introducing a phase shift between two
15 adjacent secondary beams such that said two adjacent secondary beams are in phase opposition, and
creating and observing an image formed by interference between said secondary beams in a plane located at a predetermined distance from said
20 perpendicular plane, deformations in said image being related to the slopes of the analyzed wavefront.

2. The method claimed in claim 1 wherein each sub-pupil has an area close to half the area of an elementary
25 mesh of said rectangular meshing.

3. The method claimed in claim 1 wherein said meshing defined by said intensity function is a square meshing.

30 4. A system for analyzing the wavefront of a light

beam, said system comprising :

- input optics optically conjugating a reference plane with a plane in which said wavefront is analyzed,

- a two-dimensional intensity grating with rectangular meshing in the reference plane, said intensity grating having an elementary intensity mesh in which an elementary intensity pattern is disposed and which is of length L in a first direction of said rectangular meshing and of width l in a second direction of said rectangular meshing,

- a two-dimensional phase grating with rectangular meshing in the reference plane, said phase grating having an elementary phase mesh in which an elementary phase pattern is disposed and which is of length $2L$ in the first direction of said rectangular meshing of said phase grating and of width $2l$ in the second direction of said rectangular meshing of said phase grating,

- said elementary phase meshes having sides coinciding with sides of said elementary intensity meshes, and said elementary phase pattern introducing a phase shift close to π (modulo 2π) between two secondary beams passing through two adjacent elementary intensity patterns, and

- means for observing an image formed by interference between said secondary beams in a plane located at a predetermined distance from said reference plane, deformations in said image being related to the slope of the analyzed wavefront,

5. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein said intensity grating is of the rectangular crossed Ronchi

type.

6. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein said phase
grating is of the checkerboard type with two levels of
5 thickness.

7. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein said
intensity and phase gratings operate in transmission
mode.

10

8. The system claimed in claim 4 wherein said
intensity and phase gratings operate in reflection mode.

FIG.1A

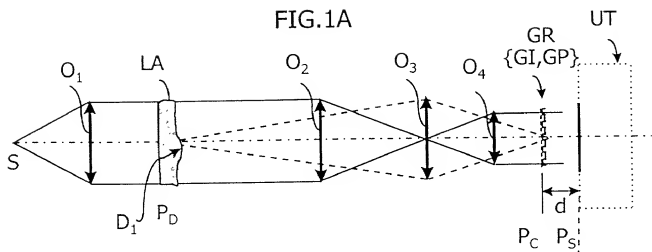


FIG.1B

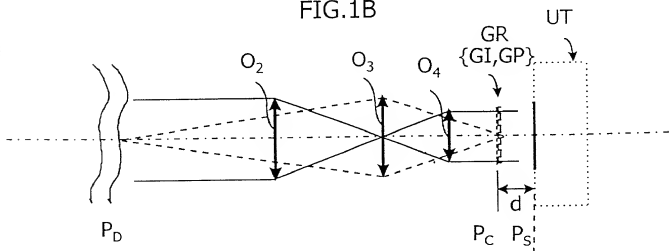


FIG. 2

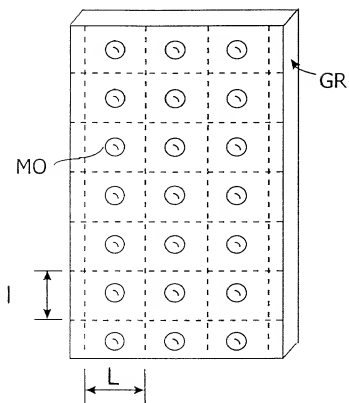


FIG. 3A

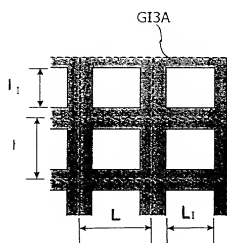


FIG. 3B

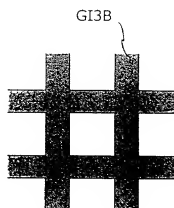


FIG.4

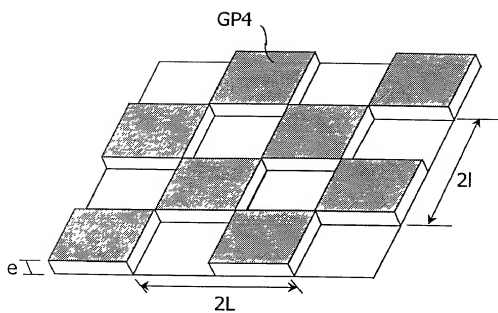
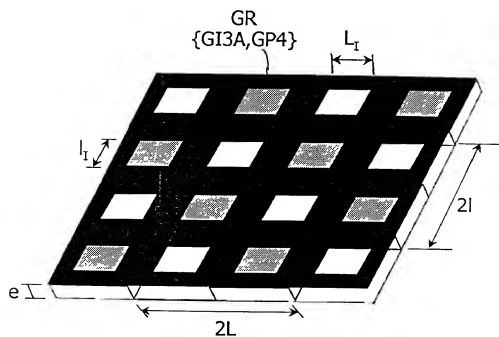


FIG.5



DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

(Foreign Agent Involved)

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

"Achromatic optical interferometer with continuously adjustable sensitivity"

the specification of which is attached hereto unless the following box is checked:

☐ was filed on _____ as United States Application Number or PCT International

Application Number _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or §365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or §365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application(s)

99-07804 FRANCE

(Number) (Country)

(Number) (Country)

June 17, 1999

(Day/Month/Year Filed)

(Day/Month/Year Filed)

Priority Claimed

☒ ☐

Yes No

☐ ☐

Yes No

I hereby claim the benefits under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

(Number)

(Filing Date)

(Number)

(Filing Date)

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 of any United States application(s), or § 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C., § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

(Appn. Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Status --patented/pending/aban.)

(Appn. Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Status --patented/pending/aban.)

The undersigned hereby authorizes the U.S. attorney or agent named herein to accept and follow instructions from my French representatives, Cabinet Martinet & Lapoux, as to any action to be taken in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office regarding this application without direct communication between the U.S. attorney or agent and the undersigned. In the event of a change in the persons from whom instructions may be taken, the U.S. attorney or agent named herein will be so notified by the undersigned.

Lawrence E. Laubscher, Sr., Reg. No. 18,202

Lawrence E. Laubscher, Jr., Reg. No. 28,233

Send correspondence to :

Direct Telephone Calls to :

Lawrence E. Laubscher, Sr.
745 South 23rd Street
Arlington, Virginia 22202-2451

Lawrence E. Laubscher, Sr.
(703) 521-2660

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of first/sole inventor: PRIMOT Jérôme

Inventor's Signature: Primot Jérôme Date: April 17, 2000

Residence: CHATILLON - FRANCE

Citizenship: French

Post Office Address: 35 Avenue de Paris, 92320 CHATILLON, FRANCE

Full name of second inventor: GUERINEAU Nicolas

Inventor's Signature: Guérineau Nicolas Date: April 17, 2000

Residence: ANTONY - FRANCE

Citizenship: French

Post Office Address: 42 avenue Rabelais, 92160 ANTONY, FRANCE

Full name of third inventor:

Inventor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Residence:

Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of fourth inventor:

Inventor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Residence:

Citizenship:

Post Office Address: